

RELATED TERMS

- Evacuation Drill
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PRACTICE NOTE

Exercise Planning: City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Office of Emergency Management's Incentives for Recruiting Volunteers

PRACTICE

Exercise planners for the Pittsburgh Office of Emergency Management used a free concert at PNC Park to recruit large numbers of volunteers required for an evacuation exercise.

DESCRIPTION

The City of Pittsburgh Office of Emergency Management planned and executed an evacuation drill at PNC Park in 2005. The exercise tested PNC Park's evacuation procedures and assessed the capabilities of local agencies to respond to an explosion at the stadium. Exercise planners recognized that potentially thousands of volunteers would be needed to accurately test the stadium's evacuation procedures and meet the exercise objectives. Normal volunteer recruitment efforts had yielded around one hundred participants at best in past events run by the exercise planners. They quickly recognized that unconventional recruitment methods were needed to ensure adequate turnout at the exercise.

Exercise planners organized a free concert that featured local music groups immediately before the exercise. The Pittsburgh Pirates organization sponsored the concert and advertised the event on local radio stations and through the local American Red Cross chapter. The only requirement for admission to the concert was participation in the evacuation drill.

Over six thousand volunteers showed up to the full-scale exercise as a result of the incentive. Exercise play began during the concert when exercise managers set off flashes and loud noises to simulate an explosion. Volunteer participants then evacuated as instructions were broadcast through the public address system. The large turnout allowed exercise managers to practice realistic evacuation procedures at PNC Park.

CITATIONS

Massey, Kyle. Exercise Manager, CRA Inc. Interview with *Lessons Learned Information Sharing*, 30 Aug 2006.

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